



Photo by Guillermo Sosa | Laredo Morning Times

State Rep. Richard Raymond, D-Laredo, fifth from left, marches along with local public officials and educators, in the March for Education on Saturday morning. The group walked from the Laredo Civic Center to a Martin High School parking lot prior to the start of the program at the rally.

# Rally promotes local education

By **TRICIA CORTEZ**  
LAREDO MORNING TIMES

Nearly 150 teachers, parents and community members spent part of a breezy Saturday morning at the March for Education and rally organized by state Rep. Richard Raymond, D-Laredo.

The marchers' goal is to send a message to Austin lawmakers that Laredo schools not be left behind as they grapple with the proposed school finance bill, House Bill 2, that would increase education spending by nearly \$5 billion over the next two years and cut property taxes

by roughly 27 percent.

Under an overcast sky, marchers made their way from the Laredo Civic Center to nearby Martin High School where District Attorney Joe Rubio served as master of ceremonies at the rally.

Few details were presented about the content of the bill; speakers talked in general about how bad it would be for Laredo public schools. The Republican-led bill, which narrowly passed the Texas House in early March, will come before the full 51-member Senate this week.

To pay for proposed changes, the Senate wants to enact a partial statewide

school property tax, reform the business tax and increase taxes on cigarettes, alcohol and other items.

The Senate plan also calls for raising teacher pay by about \$5,000, giving teachers more money based on TAKS test scores; demanding closer oversight of charter schools and turning over low-performing schools to private managers.

Standing with Raymond on makeshift bleachers in the Martin High parking lot were Laredo ISD Interim Superintendent Sylvia Bruni, United ISD Superintendent